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Committee for Programme and Coordination

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Agenda item 7

**Adoption of the report of the Committee on its
fifty-fourth session**

Draft report

Rapporteur: Mr. Hiroshi Onuma (Japan)

Addendum

Proposed strategic framework for the period 2016-2017

(Item 3 (b))

Programme 19

Economic and social development in Western Asia

1. At its 16th meeting, on 11 June 2014, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered programme 19, Economic and social development in Western Asia, of the proposed strategic framework for the period 2016-2017 (A/69/6 (Prog. 19)). The Committee also had before it a note by the Secretariat on the proposed strategic framework (E/AC.51/2014/CRP.1).

2. The representative of the Secretary-General introduced the programme and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration of the programme.

Discussion

3. It was noted that changes had been made to the proposed strategic framework as compared with that for the biennium 2014-2015.

4. The view was expressed that the programme plan included issues of a political nature that were not suited to a regional economic commission, such as the reference in paragraph 19.6 to the political landscape of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia region having experienced dramatic transformations with the increasing demands by citizens for freedom and social justice, and the reference in paragraph 19.18 to the need for strong institutions to quell ongoing political tensions and conflicts in some countries, and to support democratic



transitions in others. It was emphasized that such wording should be avoided when it was not part of the mandate. The view was expressed that the programme should have focused more on development and economic issues and that the wording in the biennial programme plan for 2014-2015 was correct and factual.

5. A delegation pointed out that there was no reference to the conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic and neighbouring countries, asking whether the conflict, in particular the refugees fleeing from the Syrian Arab Republic, was covered by any subprogramme. It was also asked whether the Commission had a mandate with regard to the conflict. Clarification was sought as to whether the Commission took into account economic sanctions and their impact on the social and economic development of States.

Conclusions and recommendations

6. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the programme narrative of programme 19, Economic and social development in Western Asia, of the proposed strategic framework for the period 2016-2017, subject to the following modification:

Overall orientation

Paragraph 19.6

Replace the first sentence with the following: "Since late 2010, the political landscape of the ESCWA region has experienced dramatic transformations".